

§ 3403.4

7 CFR Ch. XXXIV (1–13 Edition)

leasing company must be considered employees of the awardee. This is consistent with SBA's size regulations, 13 CFR 121.106—Small Business Size Regulations.

(5) For both Phase I and Phase II, the R/R&D must be performed in the United States. However, based on a rare and unique circumstance, ADO approval may be granted to perform a particular portion of the research or research and development work outside of the United States, for example, if a supply of material or other item or project requirement is not available in the United States. The ADO, after consultation with the agency SBIR National Program Leader, must approve each such specific condition in writing.

(b) [Reserved]

Subpart B—Program Description

§ 3403.4 Three-phase program.

The Small Business Innovation Research Grants Program is carried out in three separate phases described in this section. The first two phases are designed to assist USDA in meeting its research or research and development objectives and will be supported with SBIR Program funds. The purpose of the third phase is to pursue the commercial applications or objectives of the research carried out in Phases I and II through the use of private or Federal non-SBIR funds.

(a) *Phase I.* Phase I involves a solicitation of grant applications (hereinafter referred to as proposals) to conduct feasibility-related experimental research and development related to described agency requirements. These requirements, as defined by agency topics contained in the solicitation, may be general or narrow in scope, depending on USDA needs. The object of this phase is to determine the scientific and technical merit and feasibility of the proposed effort and the quality of performance of the small business concern with a relatively small agency investment before consideration of further Federal support in Phase II.

(b) *Phase II* is the principal research or research and development effort in which the results from Phase I are expanded upon and further pursued, nor-

mally for a period not to exceed 24 months. Only SBIR awardees in Phase I are eligible to participate in Phase II. This includes those awardees identified via a "novated" or "successor in interest" or similarly-revised funding agreement, or those that have reorganized with the same key staff, regardless of whether they have been assigned a different tax identification number. For each Phase I project funded, the awardee may apply for a Phase II award only once. Phase I awardees who for valid reasons cannot apply for Phase II support in the next fiscal year funding cycle may normally apply for support no later than the second fiscal year funding cycle.

(c) *Phase III* refers to work that derives from, extends, or logically concludes effort(s) performed under prior SBIR funding agreements, but is funded by sources other than the SBIR Program. Phase III work is typically oriented towards commercialization of SBIR research or technology. This portion of a project is funded by a non-SBIR source through the use of a follow-on funding commitment. A follow-on funding commitment is an agreement between the small business concern and a provider of the follow-on capital for a specified amount of funds to be made available to the small business concern for future development of their effort upon achieving certain mutually agreed upon technical objectives.

Subpart C—Preparation of Proposals

§ 3403.5 Program solicitation.

(a) *Phase I.* A program solicitation requesting Phase I proposals will be prepared each fiscal year in which funds are made available for this purpose. This solicitation will contain information sufficient to enable eligible applicants to prepare grant proposals and will include descriptions of specific research topic areas which the Department will support during the fiscal year involved. A notice of solicitation, and the entire contents of the program solicitation will be published, at a minimum, on the agency's Web site.

(b) *Phase II.* For each fiscal year in which funds are made available for this